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“A Reflection On My Time In Brunei Darussalam”
By U.S. Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam, Daniel L. Shields

This coming week, after more than three-and-a-half years in Brunei as U.S. Ambassador, I will return to the United States of America to continue my career with the U.S. Department of State. As I depart, I would like to offer a few memories and reflections, as well as some thoughts going forward.

To begin, let me say that I am grateful to *His Majesty Sultan* Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the *Sultan* and Yang Di-Pertuan of *Brunei* Darussalam and his government for receiving me in Brunei and for being such warm and hospitable hosts throughout my tenure here. Brunei has truly been a wonderful home for my family and me. We consider ourselves fortunate to have lived and worked in the Abode of Peace and our lives have been enhanced by the countless kindnesses we have experienced and the many friends we have made here. From the unmatched beauty and the pristine condition of Brunei's forests to the splendor of its waterways and coasts to the diversity of its wildlife, Brunei's natural environment has made an impression on me that I will never forget. Similarly, views of Kampung Ayer and the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque, among many other sights, have impressed themselves onto my heart and will always remain there. But the real highlight of my time in Brunei has been my interaction with Brunei's people. Whether at a Royal Wedding celebration, a cultural event such as the Royal Regatta, or on a hike in Ulu-Ulu Temburong National Park, I have met with nothing but friendship from the people of Brunei. For that I will always be grateful.

My work in Brunei, as the eleventh U.S. Ambassador, has been both personally and professionally satisfying. I have been honored to carry forward our bilateral relationship and to help it to grow. Ours is a long and peaceful relationship. The frigate USS Constitution visited Brunei Darussalam in 1845 and in 1850 the United States and Brunei concluded their Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Amity and Commerce, which is still in effect today. The modern diplomatic relationship between the United States and Brunei began in 1984, with Brunei's full independence from the United Kingdom. Today, 30 years later, the U.S.-Brunei relationship is going stronger than ever. It was a great pleasure, this year, to celebrate that 30-year relationship with all of you.

Now, instead of simply saying farewell let me reflect for a moment on what has happened over the last several years in U.S.-Brunei relations and what can happen in the years ahead. I came to Brunei in 2011 and already at that time the government was busy preparing for its assumption of the Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2013. The United States collaborated closely with Brunei to develop innovative projects that were good for Brunei and the region and that demonstrated American engagement. Two important examples of such initiatives were the Brunei-U.S. English Language Enrichment Project for ASEAN and

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the U.S.-Asia Pacific Comprehensive Energy Partnership. As the projects were being implemented, Brunei's effective Chairmanship of ASEAN helped lower the temperature in the region on the South China Sea and promote broad regional military-to-military cooperation, particularly through a Brunei-hosted Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief and Military Medicine exercise that brought together 18 nations, including the United States and China. In addition, Brunei was a gracious host during its year as Chair of ASEAN to many high-level U.S. visitors, including Secretary of State John Kerry, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, and U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman.

The Brunei-U.S. English Language Enrichment Project for ASEAN exemplifies the positive direction of our bilateral relationship. Under the project, Brunei and the United States work together to strengthen ASEAN by increasing the ability of people in Southeast Asia to use English, ASEAN's working language, to communicate with each other. I was proud to be in the room when President Obama and His Majesty discussed the project during the Sultan's visit to Washington, D.C. in March 2013. Six months earlier, when former Secretary Clinton visited Brunei for consultations with the Sultan and with Foreign Minister Prince Mohamed, our two governments took the opportunity to launch the project at a ceremony at Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

Another significant project is the U.S.-Asia Pacific Comprehensive Energy Partnership, which President Obama, His Majesty the Sultan, and former President Yudhoyono of Indonesia launched at the East Asia Summit in Phnom Penh in November 2012. The Partnership is intended to support efforts to address energy poverty and energy access in the region by focusing on four priorities: renewables and cleaner energy, power markets and interconnectivity, the emerging role of natural gas, and sustainable development including rural electrification and energy efficiency. The project is backed by up to \$6 billion in U.S. financing. When the Sultan visited Washington, D.C. and met with the President, the U.S. Department of Energy and the Brunei Energy Department in the Prime Minister's Office were able to announce a new renewable energy and alternative power generation workstream. Brunei followed up by hosting a September 2013 regional workshop on grid-connected solar energy projects.

The growing U.S.-Brunei relationship also includes a commercial side, and trade between Brunei and the United States has grown significantly with landmark deals such as the purchase of Boeing 787 'Dreamliner' aircraft by Royal Brunei Airlines and Sikorsky Black Hawk helicopters by the Government of Brunei. Looking ahead, the opportunities for trade should multiply once the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations, in which Brunei and the United States are among the twelve parties, come to a successful conclusion.

Upon my return to Washington, D.C., I will inform President Obama that the relationship between the United States of America and Brunei Darussalam is strong and can be expected to strengthen further. I have been impressed by Brunei's tradition of ensuring that people of different religions and ethnicities are able to live together in peace, harmony, and mutual respect and I am confident that Brunei will find ways to preserve and strengthen that precious legacy moving into the future. The last thirty years of diplomatic relations have benefited both of our nations. It has been a period of great advancement for Brunei, and thanks to the country's wise stewardship of its natural resources and ambitious plans for a diverse and sustainable economic future, the next three decades and beyond should prove to be even brighter.

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